

THE GAGIL KINGDOM OF YAP

By

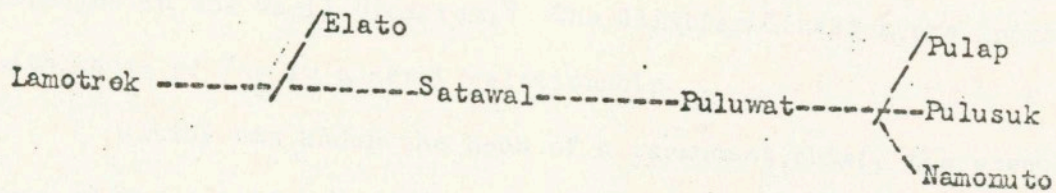
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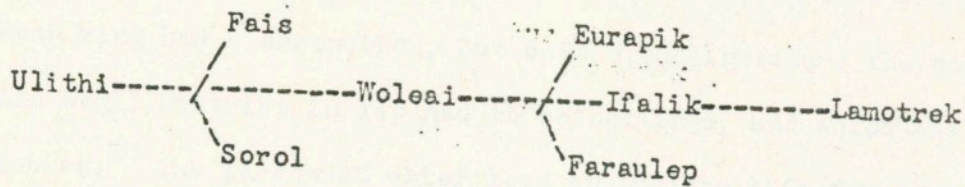
THE GAGIL KINGDOM OF YAP

The Gagil District of Yap was the center of a tributary system for the atolls between Truk and Palau, and in some respects it was similar to the system used in ancient China of tributary states. The tributary system of the Gagil Kingdom was:¹

Tributaries of Lamotrek



Tributaries of Ulithi



Ulithi was tributary to the Gagil District of Yap, and second in order of the tributaries.

¹William Armand Lessa, Ulithi: A Micronesian Design For Living. New York, Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1966, p. 39.

The Yap caste system extended to Ulithi, where the Yapese were known as "fathers" and the Ulithians as "children". The Gagil District had a responsibility to look after the Ulithians and the Ulithians were required to show respect and gratitude.² Yap exercised undoubted political control over Ulithi. It demanded and received tribute for the paramount chief of the Gagil District of Yap every two or three years. Ulithians also paid rent of a kind to certain lineages in the Gagil District.³ The Ulithian lineages are locked with those of Yap in a sawei relationship.

Ulithi was under the head of a paramount chief, the executive head of the a toll. Succession to the paramount chieftainship was hereditary within the Lamathakh lineage.⁴ A king could not pass his office to his son since his children never belonged to his lineage. Each king had a coronation, but before the investiture the consent of the Gagil District in Yap had to be obtained, and which was seldom denied.⁵ The paramount chief lead an austere life for five years

²Ibid, p. 36.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid, pp. 33-34.

⁵Ibid, p. 34.

without sexual relations and may not share his food with anyone else. Afterwards he is only allowed to share his food with religious spiritualists of the highest order: diviners, typhoon magicians, fish magicians and navigators.⁶

Ifaluk was a small unit in the Yap Empire, where the Gatchepar District (Gagil) again played the role of father to the children. The ties of the empire served mainly to govern a flow of gifts, tributes and religious offerings. A smaller series of gifts flowed to Ifaluk, but there was no external control over the internal affairs of Ifaluk.⁷ For Ifaluk the orders were transmitted from Yap to Ulithi to Woleai to Ifaluk, who then passed them on to Lamotrek.⁸

Lamotrek also paid tribute to the Gagil District of Yap. Groups from the outer islands would each start up the line towards their representatives who would join the procession with gifts going up the line to Lamotrek, then Lamotrek would go to Ifaluk with the entire party, and on up the line to Yap. Outer island representatives also presented gifts (mepel) to the head religious functionary of

⁶ Ibid, p. 35.

⁷ Marston Bates and Donald P. Abbott, Ifaluk Portrait of A Coral Island. London, Museum Press Limited, 1959, p. 189.

⁸ Ibid, p. 190.

Gagil, and sawei gift exchange occurred between the peoples of the outer islands and their Yapese "overlords".⁹

These gifts flowed from the fourteen lower islands to Gatchepan Village, Gagil District, Yap. At each outer island the chief in charge would take over and proceed, until, upon arrival at Gatchepan the chief of Mogmog, Ulithi, who represented the highest ranking outer island, would make the tributary presentation to the Yapese chief when the canoe fleet landed.¹⁰

During the German administration of Yap, Puluwat, Pulusuk, Pulap and Namomito ceased tribute payments. During Japanese times it was further reduced for four reasons: (1) the Japanese prohibition on distant inter-island canoe travel disrupted communications; (2) the advent of Christianity removed traditional Yapese sanctions; (3) introduction of foreign education reoriented the islanders' thinking; (4) depopulation of Yap resulted in a scarcity of individuals able to fulfill the reciprocal obligations of sawai.¹¹ Although Yapese control has largely disappeared, the basic inter-island ties still exist.

⁹William H. Alkire, Lamotrek Atoll and Inter-Island Socio-economic Ties. Illinois Studies in Anthropology No. 5. Urbana, Illinois, University of Illinois Press, 1965, p. 4.

¹⁰Ibid, pp. 5-6.

¹¹Ibid, p. 6.

Ulithi

Ulithi Atoll is located on the island of Mogmog, a cluster of low islets of carbonate rock near the Equator. Guam is about 400 statute miles northeast. Ulithi is made up of over thirty islets.¹² The land surface of the main atoll, including detached Falalop Island, is 1.8 square miles. The maximum depth of the lagoon is 210 feet, among the deepest lagoons in the Pacific.¹³

Diogo da Rocha, the Portugese, first discovered Ulithi 1 October 1525, but failed to locate it longitudinally, Saavedra missed it when he explored the area, Villalobos probably sighted Fais, a short distance east of Ulithi, where he found the natives greeting him in Castillian.¹⁴ Jesuits became interested in Ulithi after a canoe load of Ulithians landed at Samar in the Philippines in 1696, but their ship was wrecked in 1698 by a typhoon, a galiot looking for it in 1707 returned empty handed, and another vessel came close in 1709.¹⁵ In 1710 the patache Santissima Trinidad landed missionaries at Sonsorol where they were killed while the vessel was away

¹²W. Lessa, p. 1.

¹³Ibid, p. 2.

¹⁴Ibid, p. 5.

¹⁵Ibid, p. 6.

discovering the Palaus.¹⁶ Zabalaga reached Ulithi 6 February 1712 on the patache Santo Domingo, induced some natives to come aboard hoping to get them drunk and detain them as guides. The next day there was a commotion over trying to kidnap some young men, three natives were killed, and the Spaniards left.¹⁷ Father Juan Antonio Cantova searched for them in 1717, missed them, and was the only survivor to land in the Philippines from that expedition, studied navigation, and returned to find them 2 March 1731. He baptized 127 children. He was killed by the natives 9 June 1731 and this was the last attempt made by the Spanish to Christianize these islands.¹⁸

Captain John Mackenzie sighted Ulithi 7 June 1823 and he named the islands after himself, and in 1826 Fedor Petrovich Litke arrived. Two corvettes under Dumont d'Urville sighted Ulithi 29 December 1838. They were later visited by the German trader Alfred Tetens, the Irishman David O'Keefe, Johann Kubary, about 1870, Nicolas von Miklucho-Maclay in 1876,¹⁹ and the German District Officer Arno Senfft in 1901, 1904 and 1905.²⁰ During the Japanese times

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 6-7.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 7.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 8.

some Jesuits from Yap carried out missionary activities but the two missionaries from Yap were beheaded by the Japanese in World War II.²¹ The first Americans on Ulithi were members of the 81st Army Division 20 September 1944, in search of non-existent Japanese, and these were greeted in a friendly manner in spite of the killing of five natives in a useless bombardment.²²

Ulithian is a dialect of Trukese.²³ The people are remarkably free of infectious diseases. There were polio epidemics in Japanese times, but none since. Yaws was wiped out by the Americans.²⁴

In 1949 only five islands were inhabited: Mogmog, 142; Falalop, 126; Fassarai, 69; Asor, 53; Lossau, 31.²⁵

The Ulithian village is always located on the shore of a lagoon and is compact rather than scattered. Its dwellings are close together and the people are thrown into close proximity.²⁶ Women do most of their household duties under the shade of a tree. Burial grounds are

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid, p. 9.

²⁴Ibid, p. 10.

²⁵Ibid, p. 11.

²⁶Ibid, p. 16.

above ground slabs of coral broken off the reef. Cemeteries are simple and unadorned. Most of the island is wooded except for small gardens here and there. The nerve center of the village is the men's house.²⁷

Marriage is stimulated with outsiders by strict and wide rules of incest.²⁸ The Ulithian family is based on monogamous marriage, more for economic reasons than moral stringency, as they see nothing wrong with plural marriage, but most men are unable to maintain more than one wife.²⁹ Descent is matrilineal.³⁰ Martial residence is patrilocal.³¹ As long as a man refers to a woman as his sister he may not be in her company alone, use sexual language in her presence, sleep under the same roof with her, have intercourse with her, or marry her.³² If a man calls a female his "child" she comes under slightly reduced restrictions: he must not marry or have sexual relations with them nor use coarse language in their presence. This may extend to include nieces.³³

²⁷Ibid, p. 17.

²⁸Ibid, p. 11.

²⁹Ibid, p. 21.

³⁰Ibid, p. 22.

³¹Ibid.

The everyday affairs of the village are handled by a council of elders headed by a chief (metang). Middle age and a measure of intelligence and responsibility are the only qualifications to become a member.³⁴

Punishment by supernatural agencies is actually a part of Ulithian law. The structure of the law is crudely developed in its concept, codes are unclearly defined, procedures for the mediation of disputes are sporadic, and courts are absent. Although the code is weakly developed, it is not altogether negligible.³⁵ The most developed legal institution on Ulithi is the harmechung or distraint, an act designed to insure that the offender will make restitution for a wrong.³⁶ Children are often held irresponsible for their acts, their culpability depending on their age and the nature of their offense.³⁷

³²Ibid, p. 25.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid, pp. 31-32.

³⁵Ibid, p. 41.

³⁶Ibid, p. 45.

³⁷Ibid, p. 47.

Ancestors are people who possess souls that lived in their head, but the soul is not a prisoner, leaving in dreams and illness to wander or fly about and then return. When a person dies his soul leaves forever and he is then called a ghost, who hovers in the vicinity of the grave for four days, then flies away to Angaur where they bathe.³⁸ They then proceed through the various levels of the Sky World where a chief diety decides their ultimate fate. The ghosts of the dead do not lose their interest in the living. A lineage ghost is one that has returned from the Sky World to possess a lineage mate.³⁹

One of the most important early ghosts was Iongolap, mentioned in literature, and told about in 1817 by Kudu to the Russian explorer Kotzebue. He was important not only in Ulithi but in Yap, Ngulu and Fais.⁴⁰ He was born long ago of a woman who left her home on Yap in anger because of a quarrel and had created the islands of Ulithi by strewing sand on the surface of the sea. Iongolap's father was a

³⁸Ibid, pp. 49-50. This is similar to a Jewish belief in Biblical times that the soul hovered around for three days and after the fourth day they were considered dead; the soul going either to paradise or hades (ghenna).

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid, p. 51.

a Yapese, and when the boy left Ulithi to visit his father he was given most of the islands in the Caroline Archipelago and some others besides.⁴¹ One day Iongolap wanted to leave Yap to visit his mother on Ulithi, but the people would not let him go. Instead, they sent some men to the atoll to bring back gifts for him, and this was why Ulithi paid tribute to Yap.⁴²

A prophetic ghost was Marespa, born about 1868 and died at a few months old, and his prophecies were so accurate that he became second only to Iongolap as a ghost god at Gagil District, Yap.⁴³ He later became the leading ghost of Woleai. Later a shrine was built for him at Palau, and he later went as far as Sonsoral, Pulo Anna, Meris and Tobi.⁴⁴ A Polish anthropologist mentions him in the 1800's on Palau and a German anthropologist in 1909 provides fuller information on him on Ngulu Atoll. In 1947 an American anthropologist collected sagas in which he is mentioned on Ifaluk.⁴⁵

⁴¹Ibid, p. 52.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid, pp. 52-53.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid.

Demons are reported in vague and conflicting ways, some reporting that they have one eye, others two eyes, still others say they have four. Most demons are anonymous.⁴⁶

A tree spirit causes blindness, stomach pains and a sickness that distends the abdomen enormously, another is responsible for gonorrhea.⁴⁷

Black magic or sorcery is the recourse of men who wish to castigate others when they feel that they are guilty of ill will or overt actions against them.⁴⁸ Gabil men long ago selected places for the performance of magic.⁴⁹

Sexual abstinence is not viewed as a virtue to be idealized by young people and they feel no guilt or shame in premarital sex. When sexual desire is suppressed it is chiefly in conformance to the conviction that there is magic in abstinence. Sexual promiscuity or license is far from being sanctioned.⁵⁰

⁴⁶Ibid, p. 54.

⁴⁷Ibid, pp. 54-55.

⁴⁸Ibid, p. 71.

⁴⁹Ibid, p. 73.

⁵⁰Ibid, p. 77.

The Ulithian does not speculate a great deal on sex. To attempt to wear anything covering the breasts is an act of immodesty.⁵¹ Nudity is the rule among children up to five or six.⁵² In bathing or elimination one must take care not to be seen by a member of the opposite sex.⁵²

Preoccupation with sex manifests itself chiefly in the dance, with twenty named standardized movements. Songs accompany the dance are bolder than the gestures accompanying them.⁵³ Ulithian curses and profanity are overwhelmingly lewd.⁵⁴ "True" homosexuality seems to be unknown on Ulithi.⁵⁵ Rape, not uncommon in former times, is unknown today.⁵⁶

Lamotrek Atoll

William H. Alkire spent fifteen months living among the 200

⁵¹Ibid, p. 78.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid, p. 79.

⁵⁴Ibid, p. 81.

⁵⁵Ibid, p. 82.

⁵⁶Ibid, pp. 91-92.

people on Lamotrek, one of fifteen closely spaced low lying atolls. It is inseparably bound to Elato, fifteen miles away, and Satawol, forty miles away, and these three atolls make up a single social system.⁵⁸ Yap is nearly 600 miles west.⁵⁹ Exchange of goods, through reciprocal obligations, and exchange of people through marriage patterns is continuous.⁶⁰

Lamotrek's population was estimated to be 2,000 in 1800, 300 in 1890, and 200 today. Satawol had 900 in 1800, 200 in 1890 and 300 today. Elato has 50 people today.⁶¹ Death, whether through disease, storms, or loss of canoe loads of men at sea, may virtually wipe out certain clans and subclans, leaving a social imbalance that affects the entire system of reciprocity. The balance may, however, be restored through intermarriages and movements of large groups of people to depopulated atolls.⁶²

⁵⁸W. Alkire, p. v.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid, pp, v-vi.

⁶¹Ibid, p. vii.

⁶²Ibid.

Foreign administrative influence has, for all practical purposes, replaced Yap suzerainty over the outer islands. Contact between the outer islands and the administering government has never been frequent.⁶³ There has been no alteration in the islander's basic subsistence economy.⁶⁴ In early times all the outer islands were obliged to send objects of tribute to the Gagil District on Yap.⁶⁵

James Wilson first sighted these atolls in December 1797, but there is evidence that these islanders had earlier European contacts, either at Lamotrek or Guam.⁶⁶ In 1880 an English trader named Lewis settled there.⁶⁷ Krämer arrived in 1909, the first ethnologist to visit Lamotrek, where he and his wife lived from 21 November to 10 December.⁶⁸ During Japanese administration several

⁶³Ibid, p. 3.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Ibid, p. 4.

⁶⁶Ibid, pp. 10, 149.

⁶⁷Ibid, p. 10.

⁶⁸Ibid.

Japanese settled there and on Satawol.⁶⁹ Between 1946 and 1962 no American or non-Carolinean lived there, but Shigeru Keneshiro, a Trust Territory anthropologist, spent ten days there in 1950.⁷⁰

Namomuito Atoll has ninety-four plant species of which fifty-two are indigenous.⁷¹ All of the larger animals on Lamotrek have been introduced: pigs, chickens, dogs, cats, rats and lizards. Insects abound with mosquitos, gnats, flies, scorpions, centipedes and ants predominant. Three species of terrestrial crabs exist and birds, mainly terns, boobies, frigates and boatswains, which are indigenous and common.⁷² Nearly all tropical sea life species are numerous but often localized.⁷³ There are also sharks, barricudas, rays, bonito and tuna.

Lamotrek is made up of three islands: Lamotrek, Puge and Falasite.⁷⁴ Only Lamotrek is inhabited. It is 4,100 feet long and

⁶⁹Ibid, p. 11.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Ibid, pp. 18, 20-21.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Ibid, pp. 22-23.

2,500 feet wide at its widest point, but the average width is only 1,650 feet. It has a total of 154 acres, or .24 square miles.

Lamotrek is divided into three districts: Ifang (north), Lugulapulifalu (large center of the island), which is usually called Lugulap, and Iur (south).⁷⁵ The taro swamp covers 58 acres of the island and more than one-third is intensely cultivated.⁷⁶ Pague is 1,950 feet long and 750 feet average width, with 33.3 acres. Falasite is 1,100 feet long and 650 feet across and contains sixteen acres.⁷⁷

There are three other atolls on Elato Atoll, but only one is more than 300 feet long and Falipi is about six acres in area. Lamaliur (South Elato) Atoll has Toas Island, 29.4 acres, and Ulor Island, 22 acres. Elato and Lamaliur total 141 acres or .22 square miles. Satawal is a single raised coral island 5,250 feet long, over 2,050 feet wide, and contains 245 acres, .39 square miles.⁷⁸ Olimarao and Pikh (Pikelot) are uninhabited. Olimaro is twenty-nine acres.⁷⁹

⁷⁵Ibid, p. 63.

⁷⁶Ibid, p. 75.

⁷⁷Ibid, pp. 22-23.

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Ibid, p. 24.

Freydonet made the 1800 population figures for the atolls.

The population figures for these islands is as follows:⁸⁰

	1800	1890	1909	1930	1958	1962
Lamotrek	2000	300	220	165	185	201
Elato	1200			72	41	49
Satawal	900	200	190	251	285	326
Ulor	180					
Pugue	170					
Falipi	130					
Olimaro	225					

Graves and remains attest to the fact that Olimarao and Pugue were inhabited and traditional knowledge indicates that Toas and Falaite were also, but by 1890 they were no longer inhabited.⁸¹ Lamotrekan stories tell of a severe typhoon in 1815 which caused numerous deaths and subsequent abandonment of the islands. Two hundred immigrants traveled to Saipan and were later joined by 1,000 more, and in 1962 their descendents were still living there.⁸²

⁸⁰ Ibid, p. 26.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

There are eight matriclans on Lamotrek, seven recognized as indigenous and the Hofalu, a recent migrant from Satawal. Clan membership in 1962-63 by sex was as follows:⁸³

Clan	Males	Females
Mòngailifach	48	54
Saugalacheq	12	18
Hatamang	4	3
Sauwel	13	20
Hofalu	11	5
Rakh	4	2
Gailanguwoleai	6	1
Saur	0	0
Total	98	103

Clans are status ranked due to the amount of time on the island:

Mòngailifach, Saufalacheq, Hatamang, Saur, Sarawel, Rakh, Gailanguwoleai. Hofalu has no land on the island in its name and is administered through Mòngailifach family lines.⁸⁴ The largest land holding unit is the clan.⁸⁵

⁸³ Ibid, pp. 28-29.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 32.

The chief is the most appropriate subclan's eldest male of a chiefly subclan and the senior in lineage. The sub-chief is usually a younger brother or senior man in any other lineage of the chief's clan.⁸⁶

The ochang, the elder men of the Saur clan, had the responsibility of relaying and carrying out the directives of the chiefs. Even though the Saur clan is now extinct, the responsibilities of ochang have not been transferred to another clan. Those who now live on Saur land are obliged to carry out the former Saur functions.⁸⁷

An annual meeting of the entire adult population is held in January, called by the paramount chief, where grievances are expressed and ideas proposed. This system stems from German times. The paramount chief of Lamotrek in 1963 was Lefaiap, an unmarried woman.⁸⁸

⁸⁶Ibid, p. 32.

⁸⁷Ibid, pp. 32-33.

⁸⁸Ibid, p. 36.

The average Lamotrekan male will contract 3.6 marriages during his life and the average female 3.2. In 1963 the extreme was a man married ten times and a woman eight. Such multiple marriages were common until recent missionary influence.⁸⁹ Sometimes men allowed brothers the use of their wives while they were away for extended periods. Social polygamy is still common. Most first marriages are arranged marriages.⁹⁰

Divorce is most often initiated by the husband and is easily obtained. It is simpler for a man to arrange a divorce than for a woman.⁹¹

An adopted child on Lamotrek assumes all the obligations of a natural child towards his adoptive parents.⁹²

The average taro consumption of persons, other than babies, on days that it is eaten, is one and a half pounds. A typhoon could cause a crop shortage that would last three years and the island would probably be incapable of supporting its present population.⁹³ Cocoanuts and breadfruit are the most important tree

⁸⁹Ibid, p. 54.

⁹⁰Ibid, p. 90.

⁹¹Ibid, p. 56.

⁹²Ibid, p. 60.

⁹³Ibid, p. 76.

crops.⁹⁴ Tobacco is the most important agricultural crop. The plant was introduced in Spanish times and is consumed by about 90% of the population in cigarette form.⁹⁵ Chickens, pigs and dogs are raised and eaten, and cats are raised but not eaten.⁹⁶ On Lamotrek there is an average of three pigs, four chickens and two dogs per homestead.⁹⁷

Division of labor among sexual lines is an important feature of Lamotrek organization.⁹⁸ Cultivation and fishing are the two tasks that are most sharply restricted along sexual lines and only under extreme survival conditions are these lines crossed.⁹⁹ Size of the work group will depend upon the size of the task to be performed.¹⁰⁰ During the average working day 88% of all of the women will participate in one or all of the tasks of crop harvest.

⁹⁴Ibid, p. 77.

⁹⁵Ibid, p. 80.

⁹⁶Ibid, pp. 80-81.

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸Ibid, p. 83.

⁹⁹Ibid, pp. 83-84.

¹⁰⁰Ibid, p. 84.

ing.¹⁰¹ Turtle hunting at either Pague or Falaite consumes more time than at Lamotrek.¹⁰² Copra production is primarily a mans responsibility.¹⁰³ Between June 1962 and May 1963 the people produced between 500 and 600 sacks of copra. On each of the three annual copra buying visits of the trading vessel forty of the fifty-six adult males had copra to sell.¹⁰⁴ Recently produced copra brings the highest prices and weather factors do not always allow one to continue the copra drying process over a long period of time.¹⁰⁵

The most common feast on Lamotrek is the funeral feast, prepared by the lineage of the deceased. Often the lineage of the father of the deceased will contribute labor and food. All of the residents will be invited.¹⁰⁶ Coffins are often built of old Paddling canoe hulls.¹⁰⁷ Gifts are also brought.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰¹Ibid, p. 86.

¹⁰²Ibid, pp. 90-91.

¹⁰³Ibid, pp. 91-92.

¹⁰⁴Ibid.

¹⁰⁵Ibid, p. 93.

¹⁰⁶Ibid, p. 103.

Four days after the death of Pomai, twenty members of his lineage cut their hair as a sign of mourning. His wife and daughter had shaved their heads on the day of burial and placed it in the grave.¹⁰⁸ Funeral feasts are generally held on the eighth day after death.¹⁰⁹

In 1962-63 there were non "non-Christians" on Lamotrek.¹¹⁰ They believed in benevolent and malevolent ghosts. Creation and supercasual spirits of Lamotrek are mainly those of Ulithi.¹¹¹ At death the soul becomes a yalu (god, spirit or ghost). Sky ghosts are benevolent and sea ghosts are malevolent.¹¹²

The natives were converted to Catholic Christianity in 1953.¹¹³

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 104.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 105. (on last page).

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. (On this page).

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, pp. 106-107.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p. 114.

¹¹¹ Ibid, pp. 114-115.

¹¹² Ibid, p. 115.

¹¹³ Ibid, p. 116.

The natives believe in patron spirits. Yalulawei was the patron spirit of navigation, Semeligarara and Selongi of canoe building.¹¹⁴ If death is brought about by a sorcerer, he, too, would die as a result of his sorceries.¹¹⁵ The sorcerers of Ifaluk were especially feared until recent years.¹¹⁶

Before 1953 there were ghost house shrines for the three yalus on Lamotrek. The distinguishing characteristics of these yalus were that they originated not on Lamotrek but on Ulithi.¹¹⁷

Canoe building techniques are much the same today as when Krämer described them in 1909. With the exception of steel-bladed construction tools and canvas sail, no foreign materials are utilized.¹¹⁸

Long distance voyages are usually initiated for economic reasons.¹¹⁹ Whenever possible these voyages are carried out by

¹¹⁴Ibid, p. 119.

¹¹⁵Ibid, pp. 119-120.

¹¹⁶Ibid, p. 120 (f.n.).

¹¹⁷Ibid, p. 121.

¹¹⁸Ibid, p. 130.

¹¹⁹Ibid, p. 135.

island hopping, even if the islands are not in a direct line. Truk is a common trading center. Bargaining and haggling are not a part of the economic exchange. The introduction of money has not upset the economic situation.¹²⁰

In the mid-1930's a meteorological observation station was established at Lamotrek by the Japanese and several years later a seaplane base. This base was destroyed during the war. At the end of the war twenty-five Japanese were stationed at Lamotrek and three traders were living at Satawal. None of these military personnel openly took native women as their wives, but several of the traders did. Today four men and three women on Lamotrek and one man on Satawal are offsprings of this union.¹²¹

Roman Catholic missionaries began visiting Lamotrek, Elato and Satawal during Japanese times. Their visits to the outer islands were mainly limited to the duration of the ship layover.¹²² Occasionally a priest would remain on the island several months between

¹²⁰Ibid, p. 136.

¹²¹Ibid, p. 150.

¹²²Ibid, p. 165.

ships.¹²³ During World War II missionaries were excluded from the area.¹²⁴ By 1950 there were twenty-five Catholics on Lamotrek and less than five each on Elato and Satawal. In 1953 a mass conversion began and lasted eighteen months, with ninety per cent of the people being converted to Catholicism.¹²⁵ Elato and Satawal stopped sending traditional semi-annual tribute to Lamotrek in 1963, claimed to be a result of their conversion to Catholicism.¹²⁶

Ifaluk

Ifaluk is a small, self-contained unit with half a mile of land surface and a reef^l surrounding a lagoon scarcely a mile in diameter and isolated in the open Pacific.¹ It had relatively little contact with the outside world. It is a tiny place of no global or strategic importance where the natives live in twenty-six household groups.² The Fan Nap (men's house) was forty feet long and twenty

¹²³Ibid, pp. 165-166.

¹²⁴Ibid, p. 166.

¹²⁵Ibid.

¹²⁶Ibid, p. 152.

¹Bates and Abbott, p. 17.

²Ibid, p. 18, caption under photo, facing p. 33.

feet wide, with a thatched roof that sloped steeply to within a few feet of the ground. The front part, nearest the lagoon, was sleeping quarters; there was an altar at the back end of the Fan Nap.³

Ifaluk was first known about when Father Clain gathered from survivors arriving at Samar in 1696, the list of thirty-two islands including "Yfaluk", ruled by a high chief on Lamurreo (Lamotrek).⁴ Father Cantova next heard of them from two canoe loads of Faraulep Islanders blown off course heading for Woleai.⁵

During this time the island was divided into five provinces: (1) Truk group; (2) islands between Truk and Ulithi; (3) Ulithi-Fais-Sorol region; (4) Yap Islands; (5) Palau Islands.⁶ The second group had fourteen of the twenty-six islands and reefs populated and included the "important" atolls of Woleai, Lamotrek, Satawal, Ifaluk, Eaurupik and Faraulep, with Woleai and Lamotrek being the principle islands.

³Ibid, pp. 28, 29.

⁴Ibid, p. 193.

⁵Ibid, p. 194.

⁶Ibid, p. 196.

Captain James Wilson first found Ifaluk.⁷ He discovered five of the Caroline Islands including Ifaluk and Lamotrek, where he left Andrew Lind with tools, knives and a Bible, thus Lamotrek was known as "Swede Island".⁸ Wilson also discovered Elato on 26 October 1797 and Ifaluk the next day. He listed it as "Isalook". The Duff was besieged by natives wanting to trade rope for iron. Wilson called Ifaluk rope "equal if not superior to our own hemp-made ropes."⁹ He was impressed by their good behaviour. Iron had first come to Ifaluk from Guam.¹⁰

The Russian corvette Seniavin under Fedor Lütke visited Ifaluk next, and Baron von Kittlitz was the naturalist on board during this April 1828 visit. One native stole a toggle and jumped overboard with it. Lütke held a canoe and a chief on board until it was returned.¹¹ Thefts are out of character for Ifaluk today.¹²

⁷Ibid, p. 194.

⁸Ibid, p. 195.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid, p. 197.

¹¹Ibid, pp. 198-199.

¹²Ibid, p. 200.

Andrew Cheyne, later brutally executed for rape by the Palauans, touched briefly at Ifaluk in 1844 and reported then, as now, the reefs to be covered with first class beche-de-mer.¹³ D.D. O'Keefe used to visit Ifaluk and in March 1875 the British schooner Rupak stopped at Ifaluk and traded tobacco for flying fish.¹⁴

The Germans made the villagers concentrate more on village sites when they took over. It was through the Germans that Ifaluk gained its park-like village areas, its broad pathways, and regular island cleamups.¹⁵ The Germans also practiced blackbirding at Ifaluk.¹⁶

Ernest Sarfert, a twenty-seven year old anthropologist, stayed on Ifaluk between 5 November and 17 November 1909 and his notes form the first account of culture on Ifaluk.¹⁷

¹³Ibid, p. 201.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid, p. 203.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid, p. 204.

The houses on Ifaluk are all on the two largest islets of the atolls, Falalap and Falarik, seperated by a shallow and narrow pass.¹⁸ The Fan Nap at Falarik is roughly the center of the inhabited area.¹⁹

One of the ancient folklores of Ifaluk was Maur, an ancient chief of the Sauvalarik clan on Ifaluk, who went to Woleai to take a wife, Ilimeng, by whom he had a son, Legagilawau. Some of the Woleai men were jealous and beat him over the head, leaving him for dead. That night Ilimeng went out and accidentally urinated on him and brought him back to life. Maur tied up his wounded head with a bit of rope and hid out by day, sleeping in his house at night.²⁰ Someone reported to the Woleai that Maur was still alive but they would not believe him. Maur swam on driftwood to Ella, an uninhabited atoll near Ifaluk. A passing canoe rescued him and at the men's house, Katelu, he gathered a group, stripped with his sex organ pointed to Woleai as a sign to go there and attack the people. They killed

¹⁸Ibid, p. 33.

¹⁹Ibid, p. 29.

²⁰Ibid, pp. 29-30.

all the Woleai except Ilimeng and Lagagilewau.

Ifalukian has no written language or system of records, but they have amazing memories.²¹

There were no ideas of modesty associated with the breasts and the ladies did not seem bothered by the fact that their skirts gaped rather badly near the belt line and skirt line behind, but they were very modest from the knees up and very careful not to expose an inch of thigh.²² The people take wonderful care of their children, the men holding and comforting the young as often as the women.²³ Children were never spanked, seldom yelled at, and doused in the lagoon if they became obstreperous. Cradles were low sided square boxes suspended by ropes from the rafters.²⁴ Yaws had been wiped out by penicillin.²⁵

²¹Ibid, p. 41.

²²Ibid, p. 35.

²³Ibid, p. 36.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid.

Ifaluk had ninety-two women of childbearing age or older during Marston Bates visit, and they had 255 children of which 151 were still living, and of the 104 deaths, sixty were stillbirths or infant deaths.²⁶ This is a high mortality rate by Western standards. Twenty-eight elderly women averaged 2.8 children each, eight had none and one had ten.

Children, though secure, were far from obnoxious.²⁷ There is a widespread system of adoption, and over one-third of the children on Ifaluk are adopted by other than their biological parents. Biological and adopting mothers share the care and affection in the beginning until the child is able to walk, then the child moves into the house of its adopting parents.²⁸

All Ifalikians had the smoking habit, picked up from the Germans who occasionally visited the islands "eating fire". Strong

²⁶Ibid, p. 41.

²⁷Ibid, p. 50.

²⁸Ibid, p. 51.

twist tobacco wrapped in banana leaf was used for smoking.²⁹

The last typhoon hit Ifaluk in 1907 and there is still evidence of its damage.³⁰

The bloody story of Maur seems curiously anomalous in Ifalukian folklore contrasting with the nonaggressive and peaceful character of the people.³¹

²⁹Ibid, pp. 106-107.

³⁰Ibid, p. 39.

³¹Ibid, p. 29.